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МЕЖДУНАРОДНАЯ АМНИСТИЯ
منظمة العفو الدولية
國際特赦組織

URGENT ACTION

PUBLIC **AI Index: ASA 21/46/99**

UA 120/99 **Fear for safety/possible "disappearance"** **25 May 1999**

EAST TIMOR **Jacob Martins Reis Fernandes**

Amnesty International is seriously concerned for the safety of Jacob Martins Reis Fernandes, head of the Hatiola sub-district of Ermera district, East Timor. Fernandes went into hiding in April 1999 following an attempt on his life. Some reports indicate that he may have been arrested and taken to a military post, possibly in Ermera, on 17 May 1999. He has not been seen since.

Jacob Martins Reis Fernandes was accused of supporting the East Timorese National Liberation Army (*Falintil*) after he reportedly made public statements criticising the killing of a group of internally displaced people some months ago. He was then publicly threatened by Eurico Guterres, the leader of the *Aitarak* (*Thorn*) militia, and deputy commander of all the paramilitary units in East Timor.

Paramilitaries are believed to have made an attempt on Fernandes's life in recent months. Police and paramilitaries visited Fernandes's family home in Dili in an attempt to trace him. Stones were thrown at the house by the paramilitaries.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Since early April, paramilitary groups, supported by the Indonesian armed forces (TNI, formerly known as ABRI), have carried out arbitrary detentions, torture and unlawful killings during violent attacks in several towns across East Timor, including Ermera, in an attempt to seek out supporters of independence. At least 18, and possibly many more, people were killed in Liquisa on 6 April when paramilitary units, backed up by the TNI, attacked a church where around 2000 local residents had sought refuge from earlier paramilitary assaults.

Since 17 April at least 18 people and possibly many more are believed to have been killed in Dili by paramilitary units. Despite the signing of a peace agreement on 21 April between the TNI, the National Council of Timorese Resistance (CNRT), the paramilitaries and the political groups that support integration, the situation in Dili remains tense.

According to reports, at least four independence supporters were killed between 9 and 10 May. There have also been reports of attacks on foreign journalists in Dili. Supporters of integration threw stones and shot at foreign journalists near the municipal market on 10 May. Supporters of independence and human rights monitors, many of whom remain in hiding, are still at risk of arrest or violent attacks.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in Bahasa Indonesia, English or your own language:

- urging the authorities to confirm whether or not Jacob Martins Reis Fernandes has been arrested. If he has been arrested, he should be charged with a recognisable offence or immediately released;
- urging the authorities to provide details of his whereabouts and ensure that he is not being tortured or ill-treated if he is being held in custody.
- calling on the authorities to provide protection for him and members of his family, given the serious nature of the threats posed to them by armed militia in East Timor;
- urging the authorities to disarm and disband all paramilitary units in East Timor.

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APPEALS TO:
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Kapolri
Markas Besar Kepolisian RI
Jl. Trunojoyo 13
Kebayoran Baru
Jakarta Selatan
Indonesia
Fax: **+ 62 21 720 7277**
Salutation: **Dear Gen. Roesmanhadi**

Commander Resort Military Command (KOREM) 164/Wiradharma (covers East Timor)
Colonel Tono Suratman
Markas KOREM 164/Wiradharma
Dili
East Timor, Indonesia
Telegrams: **Colonel Suratman, East Timor, Indonesia**
Fax: **+ 62 390 321 624**
Salutation: **Dear Colonel Suratman**

COPIES TO:
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and to diplomatic representatives of Indonesia accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 6 July 1999.